

Battle Against Sinister Powers.

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On one of the next days the village smith came to the courtyard in order to put the hoes and the plow in order for the cultivation of the fields. At the midday meal he also received his ample share of butter tea and of baba, a thick, boiled flour porridge which is eaten with melted butter. But the smith had to eat apart from the row of inhabitants of the house; for if he had seated himself with them close to the stove in the livingroom-kitchen, the house god (p'a-lha) and the hearth god (t'ab-lha) would have become angered and would have sent disease and misfortune to the inhabitants in their house. While the people were still slurping their butter tea, the young mother entered with little Droga Namgyal in her arms. "ŷe-pa, ŷe-pa! Da rgod-cig! Darling, darling! Smile for us!" she was saying to him. Then old Tsering Putrid called out to her daughter-in-law: "Put the child on the lap of the Garra (smith) and let it drink from his kore (drinking bowl); then it will become a real Garprug (smith's son); if then a Tsan or Lu should come, it will notice by the smell that the child has been with the Garra and it will take it for a real child of a smith and keep away from it, because even a demon may not touch a dirty Garra. It will be better to bear a little disgrace than to know it in constant danger of the evil /20/ powers. After all, you never can tell-- --!"

The sage advice of the grandma was carried out in spite of all the yelling and kicking of the little one, who did not want to get near the black man with the sooty face on any account. But all felt something like relief when the Garra with a sour-sweet smile took the child for a few moments in his arms and let it sip from his tea. His effort was thereupon rewarded by a few more bowls of the best fat-butter tea and a whole pile of flat bread cakes, as well as by a number of small silver coins. For this he also took the insulting aspects of the matter into the bargain.

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When little Droga Namgyal was a year old, a lama related to the family appeared in the house one day, solemnly sat down on the carpet, unwrapped a book from the folds of the cloth of his wide scarf and began to read aloud. While he was reading and consuming, in between, ample amounts of the butter tea that was served him, the mother, with the help and advice of the mother-in-law, energetically rubbed butter on the little round head, which already had quite a dense crop of black hair, till it gleamed like a rind of bacon. Then the mother had to sit down with the little one close to the lama; the

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goldsmith in Leh, who also produced many temple implements aside from the women's ornaments that he made, had sold him the silver one for two rupees; the consecration by the lama, who inserted a magical piece of paper by which the amulet obtained its magical power, cost another 12 anna (equals Reichsmark 1.00).

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Despite all these protective measures, in spite of all pious exercises and arts of exorcism performed by the priests, little Drogpa Namgyal became seriously sick when he was about two years old, around the time of the ripening of the apricots. He suffered from a

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very bad stomach and intestinal disease which could not be alleviated by any of the remedies applied to it, such as the eating of flour porridge, medicines, and the like. How was this possible after all the protective measures which had been taken up? There must be some special reason for this. /28/ Grandmother Tsering Putrid turned to investigating. She wanted by all means to find out what it was. After two days she came back filled with anger from the neighbor women with whom she had had a long, excited conversation. Now she had discovered the cause. The niece Yangdsom, who often had to take care of the little boy and who then carried him around tied to her back by a wide shawl, had gone out of curiosity into the house of Dragtschanpa. The latter's wife had recently died, and the niece had gone into see what the lamas, who had gone in with books, censers and musical instruments, were doing there. In so doing she had, of course, become impure, together with the unsuspecting child on her back, and the house god was angered about this. The stupid girl! For this stupidity she should have her ears boxed a couple of times once she had been purified again by an offering. And what was to happen to the sick darling? The lama Mipam who was much in demand as a healer, was called into the house. The lama sat down by the side of the mother who had the child in her lap and was crouching on a carpet; he took a book and began to read prayers to the medicine Buddha Manla (Tibetan: sMan-bla, in Sanskrit: Bhaishajyaguru), the great healer of all sicknesses. Then he produced a small brass mirror which had a loop at its edge through which was tied a strip of white silk. This mirror the lama held before the child's face in such manner that its reflection was visible in the mirror. Then he sprinkled consecrated water from a small metal jug several times over the image in the mirror at the same time constantly mumbling prayers and formulas to himself. By this process, as the holy man explained, the child was purified of all stains.

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Then the lama took a slip of paper on which he had written a

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the result of greater intercourse with the world, for their geographical position made them the principal carriers between India and Tibet. Many of them leave their homes for the winter, which they spend in Kúlu or in Simla, engaging themselves as labourers, and that even when they are in fair circumstances. They bring back money, but it is not spent on luxuries. Their food, however, has improved, more meat being eaten now than before. The men engage for the most part in trade, while the women attend to the cultivation, carry loads, and do most of the hard work in Láhaul itself.

The handicraftsmen of Spiti are the cleverest of the Kúlu subdivision. Captain Harcourt mentions their steel bits, buckles and stirrups as specially worthy of note; and Mr. Louis Dane remarks that the puzzle locks made by the Spiti blacksmiths are very ingenious. The Spiti cloth, too, is particularly good. It is of several descriptions. The strongest and thickest is made in narrow lengths furred or flushed on one side, and is very durable and wonderfully cheap. A second variety is rather fine and more expensive, while a third, woven from goat's-hair, is in much demand among European residents in Kúlu. Moorcroft records that "2,752 pieces of cloth are annually fabricated in Spiti, of which 1,600 are used in home consumption, and the rest exported to the extent of 13,140 yards." This was written in 1820, but Captain Harcourt imagines "that the manufacture has not at all retrograded. Shoes," he continues, "are imported into both Spiti and Láhaul from the plains, but winter boots are made in Spiti. Sheep-skins with the wool on are prepared very skilfully both in Spiti and Láhaul."

The Láhaulis are the most enterprising traders of the Kúlu subdivision. Collecting their merchandises from Ladákh and the countries of Central Asia, they pass annually in large numbers towards the close of the summer into Kúlu, driving before them flocks of sheep and goats, on the backs of which their wares are packed. The principal items of their trade are borax, *pashm*, or shawl-wool, raw and worked into cloth (*pattu*). These they sell in Kúlu, buying for the return journey in the spring, brass and copper vessels, sugar, wheat, rice, tobacco, dried apricots from Balti, pepper, ginger, turmeric, garlic, and onions. The winter they spend in Kúlu. Mr. Lyall remarks that "at the present day the Láhaulis trade almost entirely with the people of Rúpáhú in Ladákh and Rudokh in Tibet. Borax, *pashm* and wool are the principal imports; they say they find the trade with Léh and countries beyond unprofitable. In the summer large flocks of sheep from Rúpáhú of the big breed called Haniá are driven to Dáicha, in Láhaul, and there shorn; the Láhaulis meet the shepherds there, and exchange grain, &c., for wool at certain customary rates of barter."

The people of Spiti are less enterprising, and dislike leaving their valley. Occasionally, however, parties of men set off for Ladákh, Basáshir and Kúlu, and there dispose of their wares, receiving payment either in money or kind. The exports are cereals, manufactured cloth, half-bred *yaks* and *yak's* tails. The imports are salt, madder, tobacco, tea from Lhássá, sheep's wool, turquoises, amber, waterpails

Chapter IV, C.

Occupations,
Industries and
Commerce.
Occupations.

Handicrafts.

Commerce.

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342 fitting a series of short horizontal boards into the slots cut in the sides of the framework. The big family stove is built of a special black mud, deposited at the bottoms of rivers or streams, or dug from under the damp turf on their banks, which becomes very hard when dried. The stove is roughly square in form, with a hole at two or more corners round which the hard mud is raised into three upward projections, thus supporting the local rounded cooking-pots. These are made of copper and tinned over by the local blacksmith. We Europeans have to be very careful to have this lining kept intact to avoid copper poisoning, but one often finds the Ladaki brewing his tea in a pot from which all traces of tin have long ago vanished. Perhaps this is why we are so often upset when we accept invitations to meals in their houses. In front of the stove on the right-hand side is a projection of the same hardened mud, which is to accommodate the right-hand of the "fire blower," as he operates on the bellows. These are very effective instruments with a large nozzle pushed well under the glowing fuel, and an elongated bag of goat-skin at the outer end of which two small bars of wood are attached, with small loops of strongly-twisted thread in the middle. Through these the thumb and fingers are placed to open and close the mouth, and though it sounds and looks a simple process a certain knack must be acquired to get a good fire. Children of the house often keep it going, but the fire-blower is generally a sooty-faced, ragged woman servant, the counterpart of the old scullery-maid in the West. The stove has a large central tunnel with branches radiating out to the corner holes, and in the middle is a depression for the biggest hole of all.

Here the large pot of butter-tea is generally brewing. The tea, of which the best variety comes from Lhasa (where it is used as coinage) in bricks, is stewed for some hours, then mixed up in a special churn, phonetically named a *gurgur*, with butter, soda, salt and milk. Some writers have said our

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taneously pressing the seller's arm with two fingers, but he, not wishing to sell at the suggested Rs200, presses the buyer's arm with five fingers saying, "*tsu*" which signifies his willingness to sell at Rs250. Eventually they strike the bargain at Rs230, two pressures with the spoken word of *Imeme*, and three to *tsu* having settled the deal. Then we also can watch the Tibetan who has brought salt, borax and Lhasa tea to barter with the Balti for his dried apricots and cooking-butter. The nomad from Changtang brings the long soft wool from his long-haired sheep, which the Kashmiri trader carries down to be transformed into *pashmina*, the basis of the far-famed delicate Cashmere shawls. The nomad gentleman does not seem at all chilled himself by the cold nip in the autumn air, for he often has a shoulder completely withdrawn from his long, wide sleeve, and the exposed lung area seems quite insensitive. The man from Kulu has carried kerosine up here, and perhaps also china cups, whilst the merchant from India supplies German cloth or rich stuffs for the Ladaki gala dresses, chemises and pantaloons, haberdashery of all kinds, Indian tea, spices, cigarettes, and the hundred and one things which are needed by the Ladaki housewife to keep her family up to the standard of civilization locally attained. In autumn, when trade is at its maximum, it is a good thing there is no vehicular traffic in the bazar, for the more bulky wares are deposited in large bundles about the main street, and it is only possible for the pedestrian to steer a zigzag course along the thoroughfare, further complicated by the waiting yaks, zo's, horses, asses and mules.

One would like to describe how the blacksmith makes a hole in the ground and, with goatskin bellows and charcoal, gets quite a good fire in which he works his metal and makes his pots, pans and attractive teapots; also to tell of the carpenter, sitting on the ground holding the plank with his two feet and one hand, while sawing with the other, and in

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